

HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

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HOW THE OTHER FELLOW DOES IT

Many BULLETIN readers have praised the reports of the Managers' Division field men summarized in recent issues. More sections from these reports are given below. The BULLETIN's value to housing management would be materially increased if active managers and their assistants would report similar methods and problems from their current practice and would comment on the practices described in these columns.

DURKEEVILLE, Jacksonville, Florida

Durkeeville, a 215-unit vacant land project which opened for occupancy on June 19, 1937, is an attractive development of one- and two-story row houses for Negroes. The average annual income of these families is under \$800. The project employs a maintenance crew of four and an office staff of three.

Central heating is not provided because of the warm climate, wood-burning cook stoves in the kitchen of each unit supplying such heat as is necessary. Concrete storage boxes for wood, located just outside the rear door, have become breeding places for rats and bugs.

Rents are collected by the week and are due on Saturday. If the tenant has not made his payment by 10 a.m. on the following Monday, his statement is stamped "late." If the rent has still not been paid by Tuesday, a notice is sent calling attention to the matter. If this does not bring the tenant into the office, a second form letter goes out. Although this usually brings the tenant into the office, if there is still no response, a member of the management staff makes a personal call with a letter requesting the tenant to move. The management feels that the practice of stamping statements "late" has had some effect in preventing those delinquencies which result simply from procrastination.

A nursery school with an enrollment of 68 pre-school children has been especially successful. The school is sponsored by the mothers' club as a means of providing care for their children during working hours. A full-time supervisor conducts the school and provides lunch for the children at a cost of 25¢ a week for each child who attends. Free nursing service is supplied twice a week by the city, the service including free vaccination and blood tests. All activities, including the nursery school, are carried on in regular dwelling units for lack of other space. This arrangement is satisfactory neither to tenants nor management.

Loose sea shells, used as a surface for play and other areas, have proved very unsatisfactory. The management is now planting Bermuda grass over these areas. Step ramps are also being installed as a means of protecting grass and shrubs from damage from small vehicles.

--STANNARD-KIDD

NEWTOWNE COURT, Cambridge

Newtowne Court in Cambridge (Massachusetts) is a PWA project that has been turned over to the Cambridge Housing Authority for management. The present manager, Mr. Charles McMenimen, was in charge before the transfer to the local housing authority. The project consists of 294 apartments.

The rent collection record here is extremely good. In seventeen months prior to my visit, 24 families had moved out, not all voluntarily. McMenimen attributes this fact to his policy (which he finds entirely satisfactory) of charging 2% on delinquent payments. His procedure is to notify any tenant who has not paid rent by the third of the month. If there is an acceptable reason for the delay in payment, the penalty of 2% is waived. If there is no response to the notice sent on the third, a

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visit is made to the family on the fifth of the month by the rental-aide clerk of the manager's staff. Extensions of five to ten days, without penalty, are sometimes granted. Rent collection is not regarded as any problem here.

Tenants who lock themselves out of their apartments are charged five cents for each time.

Although about 600 children live in the project, there is almost no provision for play, a fact which naturally constitutes a constant problem of many aspects. The most obvious visible result is that many windows are broken and the lawns are less pleasing in appearance than would be desirable. Indoors, only two basement rooms, with a capacity of 50 to 60 children at a time, are available, and these are poorly designed, with columns cutting up the space.

A certain amount of cooperation between the project and other city agencies exists. The Board of Health has sent a doctor and a nurse to inoculate the children against the usual children's diseases. One extremely interesting piece of information came out of the discussion in this point: nineteen families in the project are on the Mothers' Aid rolls. In 1937 these families required 68 visits for medical care, at a cost to the public agency of \$111.80. In 1938 the same 19 families required only 31 visits, at a cost of \$49.65. Without trying to draw too large conclusions from a single experience, one may find this fact suggestive of a possibly demonstrable correlation between housing and health.

There is a fair variety of community activity here, including a men's club, a women's club, and both girl and boy scouts. The City Park Department supplies one paid recreation worker. Although this young woman is doing a competent job, the need for more workers in a child-population of 600 is plain enough. Three or four WPA workers were at one time assisting, but McMenimen found them unsatisfactory.

The project does not publish its own newspaper. The Cambridge Sun, a local commercial paper, carries a column devoted to the activities of the project, with news provided by the recreation worker and the manager.

The management staff consists of McMenimen himself, a bookkeeper, one rental clerk (who also acts as a management-aide and stenographer), and one general clerk in the office. There are three janitors, one han-

dyman, one landscape man, one fireman with two assistants for seven months, all under the supervision of a Supervisor of Maintenance. No tenant maintenance arrangements have been made. McMenimen feels that it is impossible to undertake them once the project has been opened without them.

To my considerable amazement, extermination did not seem to be regarded as any problem. Only six instances are on record of families having requested help in getting rid of vermin. A handsprayer is used, irregularly, by the superintendent. The apartments are inspected twice a year for physical maintenance. Six families have been found to possess living habits which were unsatisfactory. Four of these families were asked to move.

--GOLDFELD

UNIVERSITY HOMES, Atlanta

As in other projects, shrubbery and lawn around porches and other entrance ways take quite a "beating" from small children. It has also been difficult to maintain grass and shrubs around common public steps (because of the damage caused by bicycles, wagons, etc.). There are numerous steps of this kind because the project is built on land of several different levels. A practical solution to this problem was found by pouring concrete ramps adjacent to the steps.

A maintenance force of 19 and an office staff of 8 are employed at the project. (University Homes has 675 dwelling units.)

Space has been provided for community activities by converting certain commercial space in the management building into an auditorium with a stage. Several smaller rooms have been taken over for use as handicraft shops and for other purposes. Small decentralized play areas provided on the project have not proven satisfactory, primarily because of the question of supervision. The new Negro project to be constructed will eliminate these tot lots and will provide in their place larger backyards for the smaller children to play on.

--STANNARD-KIDD

DISTRIBUTION POLICY ON BULLETIN

The HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN is distributed to members of NAHO who have signified their desire to receive it for a trial period. Copies are available to non-members only by purchase of individual issues at 15¢ each. It is anticipated that the BULLETIN will become shortly the official organ of the Housing Management Division of NAHO, now being organized.

FIRST MEETING OF MANAGERS' DIVISION

NAHO's Managers' Division should really shift into high at the Association's Annual Meeting in New Orleans on December 6, 7, and 8, 1939. The Committee on Organization and Procedure has followed through its excellent work reported in earlier issues of the BULLETIN. A draft of by-laws will be mailed to charter members for their consideration and possible approval before the Annual Meeting. Thus in December the stage should be set for determining the Division's immediate program and electing officers.

The Division will also have independent sessions at the Annual Meeting on the current problems of the management profession. Chairman Raymond Voigt urges all readers of the BULLETIN to send in at once their suggestions for the subjects to be discussed, speakers and discussion leaders to be invited. The enclosed sheet is to make this as easy as possible. What are the important problems, current and long-run, in housing management?

Without in any way limiting the suggestions, here are a few questions that have come to the attention of the BULLETIN in recent weeks: Should more attention be given to the particular problems in operation and maintenance caused by large numbers of small children in the projects? Do we know as much as we ought to about one another's methods and records in rent collection? How is management personnel being selected? With what results? Are project employment services for tenants worth while? What are proper depreciation rates on various short-term items of equipment? What more can we learn about public relations? How are the public relations of individual projects related to those of the local authority? Are school boards, recreation departments, and other municipal agencies cooperating in programs for tenant activities? How are local authority and private large-scale projects purchasing materials for maintenance and repair? Are their prices as good as they should be?

The sooner your suggestions are sent in, the better the program will be.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 7, 8 — 1939
St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans

IMPROVING THE BULLETIN

Mr. Sherwood Reeder, community manager of Greendale, Wisconsin, suggests that managers send the BULLETIN copies of all mimeographed or printed rules, regulations, or communications to tenants on management policy or the handling of specific issues. Inasmuch as materials of this kind are usually prepared only on persistent problems of some importance, the BULLETIN would have, with practically no cost nor expense to active managers, much practical worth while information for its columns. Please tell your secretary now to put us on the list.

Mr. John T. Godber, manager of Carl Mackley Houses, Philadelphia, wants information about costs of maintenance materials--paint, etc. From his letter: "For instance, I believe I can buy a nationally known Flat White Paint for \$1.25. . . it's already been offered for \$1.30 and I think we can chisel a little bit more off. This particular product we never had before for less than \$1.45.

"It may be in other sections they are paying much more, or on the other hand much less. In brief I think some sort of a clearing house arrangement on matters of this sort might be to the mutual benefit of all the housing buyers concerned. What think you?"

What do you think about it? The BULLETIN would be prepared to start the exchange of ideas and results on this point. Later it might become a separate service of the Managers' Division. Statements sent into BULLETIN, of course, should be sufficiently detailed so that our readers will know exactly what materials are being bought for what prices.

DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

LOCKEFIELD GARDENS, Indianapolis Lionel F. Artis, Manager, passed its first anniversary with every cent of rent paid in full --

GREENHILLS, Cincinnati to open a formal community activities program, issued questionnaires to all residents to determine their interest in adult classes and as a result established classes in home making, manual arts, fine arts, sewing, economics, first aid, women's gym, men's gym, and golf. Teachers in the Greenhills school give one even-

ing a week to this adult education program. Some leadership has been obtained from the residents and agencies in Hamilton County. The total enrollment in the classes is 494 and an average attendance of 300 has been maintained.

Also, Manager Carleton Sharpe states that great emphasis has been put on activities for children. There are hobby clubs for both adults and children--as, choral, drama, gun, garden, athletic, radio, and pet clubs. In addition, the project has many other organizations such as P.T.A., church guilds, the American Legion, political clubs, volunteer firemen, a credit union, a cooperative, community forum, community newspaper, community council. The Community Council is a group of nine members elected by the community to assist the management in determining policies and in planning the recreation and adult education program --

ARTHURDALE, West Virginia FSA subsistence homestead community, operates its own farm, poultry yard, and dairy, all of which after three years are reported moving from "red to black ink." Some of the homesteaders have been re-trained to manufacture solid-wood handmade furniture of colonial design, while others work in pewter, copper, and brass. The Arthurdale Farm Equipment Corporation, managed by American Cooperatives, Inc., completed its assembly of 150 "co-op" tractors this spring and is now under contract to assemble exclusively the Rust Brothers Cotton Picker --

BRAND WHITLOCK HOMES, Toledo At the annual track meet of Toledo's City Recreation Department, the playground of Brand Whitlock Homes became the new city champion and scored almost twice as many points as the number two team.

TENANT PAPERS HELP MANAGERS Because most project newspapers are published by and for the tenants, many of them set aside a special section for management announcements. In the "Times," published by Andrew Jackson Courts, Nashville, Tennessee, there is a column entitled "From the Manager" which contains notices of change in plans or policy concerning rents, staff, pets, etc. In Cincinnati the tenants of Laurel Homes follow a similar policy in their publication, "Laurel-Ville-Life" under the heading "Management Notes."

TENANT SELECTION

The Syracuse Housing Authority recently issued a pamphlet on tenant selection methods for the benefit of prospective tenants and for general educational distribution. Two pages from the booklet are shown herewith:

Sergei N. Grimm, executive director, states: "We began to take applications only a short time ago and we develop means of reaching the right class of families as we go along, trying to feel our way. In fact, for the time being we are concerned with how to avoid a flood of applications from the wrong kind of people, rather than finding a way to get the right ones to apply. In addition to publicity. . . we have contacted several agencies which are in close touch with the low income group, such as the Recreational Department, Labor Union Headquarters, Credit Bureau, Visiting Nurses Association, City Health Department, and several social agencies which are dealing primarily with non-relief or supplementary relief clients.

"As soon as the schools are opened we expect to reach some families through the school children in the blighted areas. We have just completed a model of the project which is to be exhibited in places frequented by the people of the low-income group."

You May Be Eligible to Occupy One of These Units:

IF—Your family income from any source is not more than the amounts shown below:

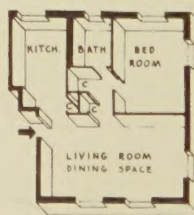
| Size of Family | Yearly Income | Size of Family | Yearly Income |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 2 | \$ 950 | 6 | \$1,300 |
| 3 | 1,050 | 7 | 1,399 |
| 4 | 1,125 | 8 | 1,399 |
| 5 | 1,225 | 9 | 1,399 |

IF—You are living under substandard housing conditions.

You Are Living Under Substandard Housing Conditions:

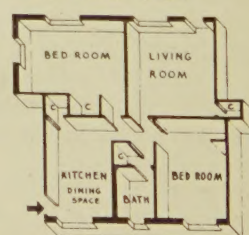
IF—Your home conditions are unsafe, insanitary, overcrowded or detrimental to morals. That is, if the home in which you live is beyond repair or in need of major repair, has no private toilet, no private bathtub, dark rooms, inadequate and unsafe artificial lighting, inadequate cooking facilities, excessive fire hazard on adjacent properties, etc.

3 1/2 ROOM APARTMENT



OCCUPANCY OF THIS UNIT IS LIMITED TO A FAMILY OF 2 TO 3 PERSONS

4 1/2 ROOM FLAT



OCCUPANCY OF THIS UNIT IS LIMITED TO A FAMILY OF 3 TO 5 PERSONS